



# THEATER



IN presenting the customary recital of an author's previous achievements, the program for "The Embassy Ball" makes no allusion to what many of Mr. Thomas' admirers regard as his most hopeful production, that biographical drama, "Oliver Goldsmith." Although never as high in popular favor as its merits entitled it to rank, it was the means of solidifying the reputation of the late Stuart Robson as an actor of serious excellence and of giving Mr. Thomas a literary prestige which even "Alabama" did not quite secure for him. Since "Oliver Goldsmith" Mr. Thomas' more substantial ambitions seem to have faltered. He has been devoting himself to little farcical pieces with a limited cast and moderate scenic requirements and joined in the universal chase of that literary butterfly, the epigram.

He does many things well and suffers from an excess of mental riches. So many different styles has he at command that they occasionally interfere. In "The Embassy Ball," for instance, there is a distinct clash of purposes, as if the writer worried of his own devices and longed for scope and variation. In one scene the play seems to be a rather rugged picture of human nature, and in the next it is an effort to reproduce the luster of a highly polished though superficial refinement. The introduction of colored people to represent the servants about Washington is not a happy inspiration, for it requires some legitimate talent to display even the part of a servant correctly and convincingly. The self-consciousness of inexperience was always in evidence when experiment in human realism was paraded.

It is said that Mr. Thomas expended as much as a month or six weeks in studying the local atmosphere of this city. It is a feat of rapid absorption surpassed only by the achievements of Mr. Poultny Bigelow. Some ten years ago Mr. Thomas produced a Washington play in New York under the title of "The Capitol." It was not a success, although it contributed something to the stage by bringing Miss Amelia Bingham prominently before the public. Indeed the Washington play is almost as baffling as the Washington novel which the world is still awaiting despite the announcement in every popular catalogue that the long-felt want has at last been filled. There are two Washington plays that stand out with sufficient distinctness to make them easily remembered. One is "The Senator," in which William H. Crane did some excellent work. This play was particularly the work of a man entirely familiar with conditions and people here. The other was Charles H. Hoyt's genial political travesty, "The Texas Steer," much of whose success Mr. Hoyt publicly avowed was due to Tim Murphy, a native and for years a resident of this place. While there are unconvincing moments in "The Embassy Ball" it must be conceded that for a six weeks' creation it is a very remarkable and creditable work. It provides Mr. Lawrence D'Orsay with some lines of splendid cleverness, and what is of more consequence, gives him frequent opportunity to laugh in his own infectious fashion.

When the inevitable ordeal of curtain speech was reached last Monday night the usual paradox was presented. The star, who is supposed to be but the interpreter of the author's luminous mentality, was filled with ready repartee and impromptu grace. If Mr. D'Orsay's speech was his own, the playwright should have made an arrangement by which the star in return for literary favors done him in the course of set dialogue should lend some of his expertise in framing expressions of formal gratitude for the public's kind applause. It is no unkindness to suspect that stars do not always write their own curtain speeches. Greater men than they have called in assistance in formulating public utterances. Neither is it harsh to imply that Mr. Thomas, who is known to be a speaker of felicity on social occasions, did not eclipse the brilliancy of the play's lines by his own extempore comments.

An audience invariably wants to see the man who wrote the play. The curiosity is a compliment and the author being one who lives by popular favor, is perhaps under certain obligations to recognize it in a friendly and complaisant spirit. But it is unfair to expect him to contribute a little monologue on his own account. His function is not, like that of the actor, dependent on his ability to personally impress and he is at a tremendous disadvantage in being wholly preoccupied with stern realities to a degree which make the airy fictions of polite intercourse more or less difficult. By the time an audience is ready to call for him the author's work has practically passed out of his hands. Even though his work be well done he is dependent on the performers for the grace in which he is to stand with the public. There is a strong chance that he may not feel at all like being a social lion, but prefers being one of the sort that go ravening about, seeking whom they may devour.

It is seldom that a playwright's personality releases the imagination, picture that people have drawn. Hall Caine, as he came forth to acknowledge the plaudits awaiting him at "The Christian's" triumphant premier in this city, was not the calm and majestic figure of somber intensity which "The Bonfire" and "The Deemster" had conjured up in the imagination. His clothes fitted him loosely and his hair and beard seemed to share the same misfit tendency. The smallness of his features gave him an air rather of egotistic assumption than of a rightful demand for deference to extraordinary attainment. Mr. David Belasco always appears to be taken with a terrific case of stage fright, from which he recovers only by supreme effort. But he always recovers. There is never a moment when Mr. Belasco is not an entire master of the effect. George Ade stepped before the curtain the night of the "College Widow's" first presentation, not with the checked vest and horse-hair diamond pin that would become a man who makes slang his specialty, but a well-bred, unaffected young chap with every indication of refinement. Mr. Clyde Fitch appears far more like a social dandy than a business-like talk merchant who can sit down to a typewriter and turn out copy as fast as a manager demands it. Mr. Thomas looks like a prosperous banker or broker rather than a purveyor of human sentiment and phraseology. With few exceptions the call for the author serves but slightly in enhancing a general impression of the evening's entertainment. But it is an ordeal that must be met; one of the many handicaps that a first night has to carry.

The man who has made the greatest pecuniary success of the biographical drama

is Chauncey Olcott, who has presented to the stage a portrait gallery of celebrities who stand close to the affections of so many English-speaking people. Mr. Olcott finds that comfort which comes to a man who has discovered his own qualities and limitations and who strives up to them, but not beyond. In addition to being a singer and comedian with most winsome talents, it is safe to say that Mr. Olcott is a bit of a philosopher. PHILANDER JOHNSON.

**FRANK DANIELS' CAREER.**—Frank Daniels was born in Dayton, Ohio. His parents took him to Boston when he was a child, and he received his education in the Lawrence School there. His father was a dentist and Frank was apprenticed to that profession, but did not like it and took up wood engraving, being employed as a wood engraver for three years. He studied vocal music under John O'Neill at the New England Conservatory of Music and made his first public appearance at a benefit performance, where he gave imitations of Gus Williams. His real professional career be-

who tempted the Prince of Judah. Miss Block made her initial stage debut in Baltimore, and some of her earliest spotlight work was seen in this city, as well. After serving her novitiate with the original Albaugh stock she played such roles as Anne of Austria in "The King's Musketeers" with E. H. Sothern, and as the Duchess of Portsmouth in Henrietta Crossman's "Mistress Nell." She scored quite a success, too, as Celia in Miss Crossman's production of "As You Like It." The Queen Vashti of the Ella Wheeler Wilcox play will be Olive Oliver, who is so favorably known in this city. She learned her art as a reader and portrayer of classic roles under Daniel Bandmann, and has supported Frederick Ward, W. H. Crane, Richard Mansfield and William Gillette. Early this season she was playing the nun Agatha in "Sunday" before Ethel Barrymore went into "Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire."

## Coming Attractions.

**New National Theater.**  
Novelty in costumes and scenic effects

play being from the same source as Wilkie Collins' "The New Magdalen." At the Princess Theater, New York "Zira" was seen for 200 nights. The players supporting Miss Anglin include Charles Dalton, as the Rev. Gordon Clavering; Jameson Lee Finney, as Capt. Arnold Sylvester; George S. Titherage, Fred Thorne, J. R. Crawford, Harrington Reynolds, Jack Standing, Harry Hyde, Stanhope Wheatcroft, Howard Lewis, Frank Willard, Leon H. Brown, Arthur Moore, Mrs. Thomas Whiffen and Miss Gwendolyn Valentine. The character portrayed by Miss Anglin is Hester Trent, afterward called Zira, a splendid production is promised for this city.

**Columbia Theater.**  
"Sergeant Brue" of the London metropolitan police, in the person of Frank Daniels, will make his second bow at the Columbia Theater tomorrow night under the management of Charles Dillingham. "Sergeant Brue" is a musical farce, written by Owen Hall and composed by Liza Lehman. It ran for over 400 performances in London, England—that is, the best part of two seasons—before it was secured for this country, and

venue entertainers. "Post No Bills" is the title of the principal motion picture subject.

**Majestic Theater.**  
Kolb and Dill make their first appearance in this city in the musical comedy, "I. O. U.," beginning at the Majestic Theater tomorrow. This travesty is said to be full of funny features and laughable situations. In this piece Kolb and Dill, as German comedians, together with Ben Dillon, as an Irishman, attempt to run a hotel on a copartnership plan, which proves a failure. They then form a corporation, assuming full duties of the hotel, and the three work jointly as one and the same person. These comedians played for over two years in San Francisco. They made an extended tour of Australia, and while there arranged for the Maori dance. This dance is an interesting feature and will be seen here for the first time in "I. O. U." Charles Vidot leads the Maori dancers. In the cast are Miss Williams, prima donna; Frederick K. Lieb, Ben Dillon, Will H. Cross, Mabel Darrell, Flossie Bain, Lucille

ture subjects as the principal attraction. The promoters of the Majestic concerts assert that tonight's program will excel all former programs. Interspersed between the several pictures musical numbers, both vocal and instrumental, will be contributed by well-known performers connected with companies now in the city.

**Marine Band Concert.**  
The seventh popular concert will be given by the Marine Band at the Columbia Theater this evening. Lieut. Santelmann has decided to make the last concert on February 11 a request concert. All requests must be received before Monday, February 5. Lieut. Santelmann has arranged an excellent program for this evening, the leading number of which will be "Leonore, No. 3," the "King of Overtures," by Beethoven. There will be heard also, "The Blessing of the Daggers," from "The Huguenots," by Meyerbeer; the beautiful ballet music from "Faust," by Gounod, and a laugh-provoking number, "The Comical Contest." A pretty little melody, serenade "Till," will be rendered by Messrs. Seal and Wacker as a duet for flute and French horn. The popu-

geographer, will tell the story of his Antarctic expedition in 1901-03. His illustrations from photographs give a realistic idea of the experiences of an expedition which, though not attaining the highest south, for which no effort was made, was perhaps second to none in the value of its scientific results.

Seats can be secured for this lecture at T. Arthur Smith's ticket agency, 1327 P street.

**Shepard's Moving Pictures.**  
Many new and interesting subjects are promised in Archie L. Shepard's exhibition of moving pictures at the Academy tonight. The "Arabian Nights" has been transformed into a picture story, and will be one of the leading features. Another interesting picture will be "The Kleptomaniac and the Thief," a comparison between poverty and wealth. Some of the latest productions are "Casey's Trip Through the Subway," "The Gun License," "Weary Willie," "The Phantom Hen" and "Raffles, the Dog."

**Sothern-Marlowe.**  
The arrangement of the repertoire for the Sothern-Marlowe Shakespearian productions at the New National Theater the week of February 5 will be as follows: Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings, at 7:45, "Twelfth Night;" Tuesday evening, at 7:45, "Romeo and Juliet;" Thursday evening, at 7:45, and Saturday matinee, at 2, "The Taming of the Shrew;" Saturday evening, at 7:45, "The Merchant of Venice." "Romeo and Juliet" will be the only play repeated from last season's repertoire. Charles Frohman is said to have given these plays and wealth of scenery yet seen in the American stage. The prices for this engagement will be \$2, \$1.50, \$1, and 50 cents.

**"Mrs. Leffingwell's Boots."**  
The action of "Mrs. Leffingwell's Boots," the Augustus Thomas comedy, which will be seen at the Columbia next week, takes place in one day, and is shown in three acts under the same roof. The incidents, from the moment that her ladyship's boots are found on the fire-escape of a Bar Harbor hotel, outside the window occupied by a good-looking young bachelor—of whom her husband is already slightly jealous—until the final curtain are described in a succession of ludicrous entanglements that are, of course, straightened out in the end to the restored happiness of everybody.

**Rose Stahl and Company.**  
Chase's bill for next week will be replete with novel numbers. Heading the list will be Rose Stahl and company, presenting a one-act comedy of stage life, "The Chorus Lady." Other features will be William Gould and Valeska Surratt, in song and comedy; the Six Per Sisters, in Japanese and Hungarian songs and dances; Byers and Hermann, in clown comedy; Burton and Brookes, comedians and singers; Les Durand trio, Hugh Jeans, base ball equilibrist, and motion pictures, entitled "Found by Rover."

**"After Midnight."**  
"After Midnight," the melodrama which has for its principal features the inner workings of a "school for crooks" in the slums, a daring escape of one of the inmates of the school across the rooftops by the East river, an ingenious burglary of a 5th avenue mansion, and the glaring interior of a luxurious gambling resort, will be the attraction at the Academy for the week of February 5.

## Playhouse Paragraphs.

Madame Modjeska is playing in California.

Harry Woodruff is to join Henry Miller's forces.

Elvia Croix Seabrooke is in the cast of "Wonderland."

An ambition to play Hamlet is ascribed to Wright Loring.

New York just now shows signs of renewed prosperity in theatricals.

It is said that Belasco's "Du Barry" is to be used by the stock companies.

Klaw & Erlanger will control the plays of George M. Cohan for the next five years.

Henry E. Dixey started his road tour in Newark this week in "The Man on the Box."

Nella Bergen is to star next season in a new comic opera. She has been appearing in vaudeville.

May Robson is to have one of the leading roles in "The Mountain Climber," with Francis Wilson.

Mrs. Stuart Robson has confided to an itinerant that she contemplates reviving some of the late Mr. Robson's plays.

Miss Paula Edwards appeared in a new opera, "The Prince of Acapulco," by Harry G. Paulton and Alfred G. Robyn in Utica last week.

Mr. Joseph Arthur, actor and playwright, who is in New York on a short visit, the first in three years, will return to London Saturday.

Cyril Maude, the English actor, is to make a production of "The Mountebank" in London, in which he will appear himself as Nathaniel Cohen.

George M. Cohan's latest musical comedy, "The Prince of Acapulco," was given its first presentation on any stage at Springfield, Mass., last Wednesday night.

Amelia Stone, prima donna of "Comin' Thro' the Rye," is confined to her apartments in New York with a sprained ankle. She slipped on the stage while dancing.

Among the productions of the week in New York was "The Fascinating Mr. Vandervelt," by Alfred Suro. Ellis Jeffreys appeared in the chief feminine role.

Maxine Elliott's three years' contract with Charles H. Dillingham expires at the end of this season and hereafter this popular star will be her own manager.

Rose Coghan and her company closed their tour at Mobile, Ala., last Tuesday night, after what the manager termed a discouraging experience of one-night stands.

Miss Maude Granger will play the role of Mrs. Lincoln in Mr. Benjamin Chapin's drama, "Lincoln," which will appear in Hartford February 19.

Trixie Frigman has sent in her resignation as a member of the Joe Weber Company, now playing in New York, and will leave that organization next Saturday night.

Little Williams, who has been a popular attraction in vaudeville for a couple of years, is to head a musical comedy company next season under the management of Charles Belasco.

Two theaters now being built for the Messrs. Shubert, in Cincinnati and Denver, will be named the Sothern, after Mr. E. H. Sothern, and the Marlowe, after Miss Julia Marlowe.

The Shubert Brothers have added to their chain of theaters another house, the Empire Theater in Toledo, Ohio. Mrs. Fiske in "Leah Kleschna" will open it under the new management in about two weeks.

Mr. Joseph Cawthorn will be the star of a new opera written for Messrs. Klaw & Erlanger by Messrs. Philip Sousa and Harry



ran in 1879, when he played the sheriff in the "Chimes of Normandy," with the Geo. A. Jones comic opera company. Later he was engaged by Charles Atkinson and appeared with what was known as "Atkinson's Jollities," in a piece called "The Electric Doll." He made a tour of the United States and afterward visited England with this company. In 1882 Charles Hoyt engaged him to play "Old Sport" in "A Rag Baby." In this he made a great success, and his subsequent plays were "Little Puck," "Princess Bonnie," "The Wizard of the Nile," "The Idol's Eye," "The Amerer," "Miss Simplicity," "The Office Boy" and his present farce, "Sergeant Brue."

**GAVE THE ELK A TREAT.**—"Once upon a time I attended a country fair in Westchester county, where I reside in the summer," relates Frank Daniels, "and I saw a family there that would have gladdened President Roosevelt's heart. The man went up to a tent where some elk were on exhibition and stared wistfully up at the sign. 'I'd like to go in there,' he said to the keeper, 'but it would be mean to go in without my family, and I can't afford to pay for my wife and seventeen children.' The manager of the show started in astonishment. 'Are all those your children?' he asked. 'Every one,' said the man from the country. 'You just wait a minute,' said the keeper, 'I'm going to bring the elk out and let them see you all!'

**AN ALLURING AD.**—David Higgins, the star of "His Last Dollar" company, is a firm believer in the value of printers' ink, especially when used in connection with a theater program. He was considerably amused, however, during a one-night stand engagement in the west, when his manager brought him the local program and pointed out the following "ad" on the back page:

**TWO MISPAH PLAYERS.**—Adele Block, who appears as Queen Esther in "Mispa-

are said to be characteristics of Manager Charles Frohman's production of Ella Wheeler Wilcox's poetic play "Mispa." which comes to the National Theater tomorrow night. Founded upon the scriptural book of Esther, this drama is calculated to convey the audience back to the time of the ancient empire of Persia, in the fifth century before Christ. Exactly what king of that great realm of antiquity was meant by the Hebrew historian in his Ahasuerus has not yet been definitely established beyond all dispute by biblical students, but it seems almost certain that Ahasuerus (the general Jewish term for a Persian ruler) was in this case either Xerxes or Artaxerxes—one of one of which cases Queen Esther, the heroine of this grand old love romance, would have been the historical Persian Queen Amestris. In their archaeological investigations, in order to give proper historical fidelity to Mrs. Wilcox's play, the producing forces of Manager Frohman have been for months earnestly ransacking the dusty archives that pertain to the time of Xerxes. As a result players will behold a revivification of strange but highly picturesque, ancient Persian fashions, which will afford a decided novelty in themselves. The scenery is by Ernest Grose and the costumes by Daxian. The king's palace at Shushan, the imperial gardens, the grand reception hall of Ahasuerus and the boudoir of Queen Vashti will afford signal opportunity for lavish pictorial richness, while the presence of a hundred personages in single scenes alone will make notable groupings of unique costumes and properties. The production is declared to be one of the most colossal and expensive ever undertaken by Mr. Frohman.

The cast includes J. H. Gilman, Adele Block, Olive Oliver, Wm. Harcourt, Chas. Harbury, Ralph Delmore, Stanley Dark and Frank Tannehill, Jr.

**Belasco Theater.**  
At the Belasco Theater tomorrow night Margaret Anglin and the Princess Theater players will be seen in "Zira." This piece, with Miss Anglin as the creator of the title role, was produced at the Belasco Theater in Pittsburgh during the early part of this season under the personal direction of Harry Miller, who, in association with J. Hartley Manners, wrote the work, their

to give it the needed local color judicious additions were made to the libretto and musical score before its American presentation. It was produced in Washington last March, and immediately afterward was taken to New York, where it ran for nearly six months. The story is told in four scenes, all laid in London, and hinges on the ambition of a London "bobby" for promotion in the force and the launching of his son and daughter in society. It is in the methods of the ingenious "cop" adopts to advance these ends that all the fun lies.

A large company continues to support the star, the principals being well known in the world of musical comedy. Miss Annabelle Whitford, who has been in Mr. Daniels' company for some time, now sustains the role of Lady Bickenhall, the impetuous society butterfly, who is intimately associated with the fortunes of Sergeant Brue and his family. Charles Drew is entrusted with the odd character part of Crookie Scrubbs. Other prominent members of the cast are Clara Belle Jerome, Charlotte LeMay, Greta Burdick, Helen Cayvan, Milly Cooke, Alice Millais, Mabel Lloyd, Anna Hall, Miriam Norris, George Lestock, Gilbert Clayton, Charlesworth Moskins, Nace Bonville, David Bennett and Neil Walton.

**Chase's Theater.**  
By arrangement with Henry W. Savage polite vaudeville has been loaned the original octet of city girls from "The Prince of Pilsen," and they will be seen at Chase's this week in "The Songs of the Cities," which was one of the most tuneful and catchy features of the Dixey-Luders opera. Miss Cheridiah Simpson now sustains the role of the vivacious widow, and Miss Blanche Burnham represents the Washington style of feminine grace and beauty. Paul Conchas, the German army Hercules and protégé of the German emperor, is expected to be a notable attraction, with his comic chatter and songs; Frank B. Seymour and Emma Hill, in a skit entitled "The Mix and the Mixer;" Otto brothers, German comedians; Mile, Parker's leading greyhounds and Harry and Eva Puck, ju-

lar euphonium soloist, Mr. Ole J. May, will be heard in tonight's concert.

## Philadelphia Orchestra.

The Philadelphia Orchestra will give the second concert of the Washington series on Tuesday afternoon at the Columbia Theater. Conductor Scheel announces the following program, with Olga Samaroff as soloist: "A Faust Overture," Richard Wagner; Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67, Ludwig van Beethoven; Concerto No. 1, E flat major, Franz Liszt; Olga Samaroff; Symphonie Prologue to Sophocles' "Oedipus Rex," Op. 11, Max Schillings. Mme. Samaroff is an American pianist who has made a profound impression in musical circles here and abroad.

**Sunday Concert at Belasco's.**  
Tonight the first of a series of popular Sunday night concerts will be presented by the management of the Belasco Theater. This concert will consist of music by a complete orchestra, together with hymns, ballads and popular melodies. Magnificent illustrations songs will be rendered by Mr. Charles Vincent, the eminent baritone. During the evening there will be display of the most recent productions in the moving-picture art. These pictures will be furnished by Miles Brothers of New York. A clean and enjoyable entertainment of two hours' duration is promised those attending.

**"Happyland."**  
Comic opera will hold the boards at the Belasco Theater during the week of February 12, when De Wolf Hopper will present his latest success, "Happyland." Reginald De Koven composed the music and the late Frederic Ranken wrote the book. "Happyland" is said to be all that is dainty, artistic and refined. The company includes dainty Marguerite Clark.

## Lecture by Dr. Nordenskjöld.

Tuesday evening, February 6, at the First Congregational Church, Dr. Otto Nordenskjöld, the noted Swedish explorer and

## Kernan's Lyceum Theater.

The offering at the Lyceum this week will be "Hughie" Kernan's latest venture, "Washington Society Girls." The two burlesques are said to be up to date and funny. The olio includes Ah Ling Foo, the Chinese conjurer; Elsie Leslie, the little English girl with the big voice; Dave Marion, in a skit called "Moving Day;" Aggie Behler; Eldora, heavyweight juggler; Lynette Sisters, West and Williams and Charles Johnson. As an extra attraction "Cunning," the handcuff king and jail breaker, will appear at every performance during his engagement.

## Electric Concert.

The Majestic Theater announces another electric concert for tonight, with a program of the latest entertaining moving-pic-

## Academy of Music.

Charles E. Blaney's exciting military drama, "Across the Pacific," will return for its annual engagement at the Academy of Music this week. It is described as a bold melodrama, bristling with human passions and abounding in startling situations and climaxes. The play is founded upon incidents of the war in the Philippines, and the Rough Rider band, the United States transport City of Peking, loaded with Uncle Sam's brave boys, and the real galling gun in action are interesting features. The story has its origin in a mining camp in Montana, where numerous schemes are hatched by the chief villain for the discomfort of everybody. From the camp the scene shifts to Chinatown, San Francisco, and shows an opium den in full blast. The plot of the villain to separate a rich ward from her guardian forms the main theme, and continues from America to a Philippine jungle. Here an exciting situation is presented in the attack of block houses No. 7.

## Philadelphian Orchestra.

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